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# News Release

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## Old missile silos buried at Tolchester

**Baltimore** — The underground silos at the former Nike Missile Site near Tolchester Beach, Md., exist no more, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, announced today. The concrete silos once held guided surface-to-air missiles critical to the Cold-War era ring of protection surrounding Washington, D.C.

Kent County is now able to use the land directly above the former silos, which had previously been considered unsafe for supporting heavy materials. The county has owned the 22-acre property since 1983. The Public Works Department stores roadwork supplies and equipment there.

The \$1 million project carried out by contractor Plexus Scientific for the Corps was started in April 2002 and completed June 18. Plexus drained water from each of the six missile silos and cleaned them of debris and asbestos. At ground level, the metal silo doors were cut off. Inside, the piping and the residual hydraulic fluid, along with the ram units and the missile platforms, were removed. Holes were punched in the floor to allow water to drain.

With the interior of the silos essentially bare, the contractor used pea stone, fabric, debris, sand and gravel to fill in the cavities and voids. The tops were covered with dirt, which was compacted and mounded slightly to offset expected future settling.

With the approval of the Maryland Department of Environment, the uncontaminated water Plexus had removed from the silos was pumped onto nearby land at a controlled rate. The scrap metal, asbestos and hydraulic fluid have been removed from the site.

The Tolchester Nike site was active from 1954 to 1967. It included a control area and a launch area. The Corps is responsible for the cleanup of formerly used defense sites, or FUDS.

The Corps also removed underground storage tanks from the control area in 2000. A third cleanup action is ongoing. It involves low-level groundwater contamination at the launch area that is expected to naturally attenuate — lessen — over time. The Corps samples the groundwater twice a year to determine whether that is happening as expected.